

REPORT OF THE INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT

December 1944

The development of a plan (by the War Manpower Commission and several plants in the North Jersey Area) to use large numbers of Jamaicans and Mexicans as "temporary" workers in war plants, attracted the attention of your Industrial Relations Secretary. Investigations of the plan disclosed that no thorough attempt had been made to fully utilized domestic labor, and that for these aliens many safeguards for them are lacking. Your Secretary felt that unemployed employables in some other sections of this country should be brought to North Jersey to work, before importing aliens. Accordingly authorization was asked and duly received from the Executive, to go ahead with, (1) the development of any facts that will show reserves of labor in this country, and (2) stimulation of governmental agencies and plants to secure the recruitment from such indicated reserves, for this area. Letters were dispatched to fourteen local Urban League branches where labor reserves might be likely. Our suggestions that W.M.C. use its own facilities to locate possible labor reserves, was evaded on the grounds that various local W.M.C. - U.S.E.S. offices have previously reported tight labor markets. Our plan was therefore, to determine from our own branches and check these facts against W.M.C. local office reports as sent into this area.

A "plan to Remedy the Ladies' Rest Room Problems" described in last month's report, was sent to Aviation Packaging Company. There was also sent a statement of specific ways to "increase morale, worker stability, and production." Subsequent discussion with Management of the company indicates that the Ladies' Rest Room Problem "has been solved" as a result of Urban League efforts.

Your Secretary has initiated a program to develop skilled toolmakers and machinists among Negroes in this area. To date, not one half dozen Negro toolmakers or general machinists have been discovered in all of North Jersey. Efforts to actually confirm the existence of any of these, have been fruitless. This specific program follows the lines of the larger objective of increasing the number of types of jobs that Negroes hold, are equipped to hold, or can be trained to hold. With two machine tool companies an agreement

has been reached whereby likely male individuals will be recommended by the Urban League, and accepted for training by either of these companies. The first actual testing of these agreements and attempt to start a Negro off as a toolmaker broke down. The person being referred fled to other employment at the first hitch in the working out of the arrangements. The need for enabling your Secretary to give more of his time to recruitment (to get better selections for such important and strategic programs), more plant work (which is being so limited that even some known sore spots can't be reached), and to more work with Unions as they settle their minds on post-war policy, is becoming more and more obvious.

General activity included: execution of recruitment for Blue Ribbon Tools Company (a good long-ranch "war-peace" company); setting up a confidential plan of advisory cooperation with a worker placed at a personnel job at Federal Telephone and Radio Corporation; investigation of U.S. government arrangements for use of Mexicans and Jamaicans in war work, with the objective of utilizing Negro workers who can't find satisfactory employment in some other sections of the country; and a case work job with a applicant for work here in Newark, as a result of marital difficulties in her home in New England. A three-week casework relationship resulted in her returning to her husband with a feeling of being able to make a serious success of her life there. Also: eight special interviews, three cases of discrimination; four plant visits, nine meetings or conferences, and three public addresses. Referrals included: (male) 1 personnel worker, 2 clerical, 4 manual; (female) one personnel, one clerical, and seven manual; and 39 domestics.